



City news,
features,
and
updates

This Week in Huntsville

January 12,
2016

Guest Pledgers Local Youth Make Meetings More Special!

January 5th was the first regular City Council meeting of the new year and the first over which Mayor Andy Brauninger presided in its entirety. He also had the pleasure of continuing the tradition of having a guest pledger to the flags.

Since former Mayor Mac Woodward suggested it in December 2011, a member of the public, usually a youth, has attended most of the Council's regular meetings to lead the pledges to the United States and Texas flags. Pledgers as young as six years old have come from groups such as the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, HISD, AKAdemy Emerging Young Leaders, homeschool groups, and other local youth organizations.

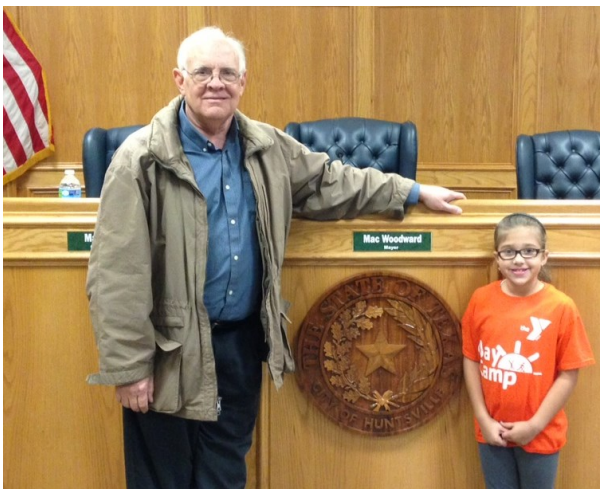
Holly Munson of Huntsville High School was asked to perform this special service at the most recent meeting, after Assistant Principal Demeka Simmons learned about the procedure.

"Thank you all for the opportunity to involve our students in community business," Ms. Simmons emailed later. "[Holly] was very thrilled to be there and her mom could not stop talking about it."

Holly was nervous about standing at the podium alone, so on the spur of the moment, she enlisted the help of her friend Payola Lopez to join her, and the two did a great job.



Mayor Andy Brauninger and guest pledger
Holly Munson.



Former Mayor Mac Woodward with guest pledger
Isabell Saumell.

Mayors and Councilmembers have also enjoyed this chance to involve community youth, often helping spread the word. Councilmember Humphrey has posted links online to video of the pledgers, and Councilmember Montgomery was instrumental in connecting Elaine Smith and the young ladies of AKAdemy Emerging Young Leaders.

"We are always happy to hear of students interested in being guest pledgers," Councilmember Montgomery said. "It's wonderful for them to come to City Hall and have a role in assisting our local leaders at City Council meetings."

Just a reminder...City facilities, including the library, will be closed Monday, January 18, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. We'll see you at the parade!

Mayors Make Good on Wager

Mayor Andy Brauninger and former Mayor Mac Woodward filmed a short video of good-natured congratulation before Tuesday's City Council meeting, wishing the Jacksonville State University Gamecocks well in their upcoming playoff game.

Mayor Woodward had accepted a challenge from Jacksonville, Alabama Mayor Johnny L. Smith on the SHSU-JSU game (won by JSU on December 19). The Mayors had agreed that the winning City's mayor would supply the losing City's mayor with a jersey to be worn during the first City Council meeting in January.

Watch the Mayors' full message online at <https://youtu.be/v0l3go6Pd4>



Save the Date - Authors are headed to town!

For a third year, the National Book Foundation returns to Huntsville in the springtime with the National Book Awards Festival. This budding literary occasion brings recent National Book Award Finalists to town for three days of events. It's an outreach program that exists to promote reading and American literature on the SHSU campus, in the community, and in the public schools, with the goal of bringing books (and the worlds contained within them) to people who might not otherwise have access to them.



National Book Awards

at **SAM HOUSTON
STATE UNIVERSITY**

The 2016 guests will be Fiction Finalist Angela Flournoy, Finalist in Young People's Literature Noelle Stevenson, and Poetry Finalist Ada Limón. The main event on Friday, March 18th, will be held in the Concert Hall of the Gaertner Center for Performing Arts with Steph Optiz, former literary director of the Texas Book Festival and fiction co-chair of the Brooklyn Book Festival in New York, serving as the moderator for the onstage interviews.

There will be other opportunities to meet and interact with the authors and learn more about their books and the National Book Foundation during this free festival, including activities at the Huntsville Public Library and the Wynne Home. Stay tuned for the full schedule and social media updates!

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

Potable water for people, pets, and portables

The City of Huntsville's Water Division has just completed installation of its first water bottle filling station, located in Eastham-Thomason Park near the disc golf course/exercise area. Water Services Superintendent Joyce Hubbard had seen the unique and multifunctional water units and felt they would be a good addition in our public parks.

"The station includes a water bottle filling tap, a drinking fountain, and a bowl at the base for the four-legged friends," Hubbard said. "We look forward to the community utilizing the new station and welcome any feedback. Look for the second station to be installed soon."

The stations are not only convenient, but also encourage park patrons to use refillable water bottles, thus reducing recyclable containers (plastic bottles or cans) being disposed of.



Right - The next installation, at Rather Park, is already underway!

Yoga Class at the Library

Are you looking for a convenient way to try yoga for the first time? Try attending our free Adult Yoga Program for Beginners at the Huntsville Public Library each Thursday from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. It's the perfect opportunity to learn and practice yoga techniques with other enthusiasts. All we ask is for you to bring your own mat or towel. The program will take place in the Library's Community Room on January 14 and 21. Please consult your doctor before starting any new exercise program. Registration is required. Sign up at the library, online at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com, or call Mary Kokot at 936-291-5471.

Essential Oils Classes are back!

Essential oils teacher, Melissa Gonzalez, returns to the Huntsville Public Library for an all new series of classes to discuss new topics on the use of essential oils. The first class will be held January 11 from 5:45 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. in the Library's Community Room, and February's class will be on February 8. Learn how essential oils can encourage greater success in keeping New Year's resolutions. No registration required and classes are open to all. Check the library calendar at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com for future class times. Call Mary Kokot (936) 291-5471 for more information.

Pilates for Everyone

Beginning January 26, from 5:45-6:45 p.m., Pilates student teachers from the SHSU Department of Dance will lead a weekly class in Pilates in the Community Room at the Huntsville Public Library. Pilates builds strength, flexibility, and lean muscle tone, with an emphasis on lengthening the body and aligning the spine.

Please bring your own towel or mat. Please consult your doctor before starting any new exercise program. The Huntsville Public Library is partnering with the SHSU Center for Community Engagement for this program. Register online at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com or call Mary at (936)291-5471 for more information.

Master Gardeners and Spring Veggies at the Library

The Huntsville Public Library is pleased to host the Walker County Master Gardeners annual spring planting workshop, "Starting Your Spring Vegetable Garden," on Monday, February 15, from 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. in the library's Community Room.

The Master Gardeners will discuss different gardening styles, soil preparation, planting time, fertilizers, watering, drip irrigation, pest control, and more. Those who feel they lack sufficient space to plant will be delighted to learn that gardening is not necessarily confined to plants in the ground. With creativity, imagination, and expert guidance from the Master Gardeners, attendees will leave with the knowledge of how to turn almost anything into an overflowing container garden.

Texas Master Gardeners are members of the local community who have been accepted into the Master Gardener training program in Walker County, have attended 50 hours of instruction and have committed 50 hours of volunteer service to Walker County's Texas Cooperative Extension program in order to attain certification. The group is committed to educating others in the community about a variety of horticulture-related topics. Their workshops and presentations are presented in an engaging manner that is conducive for learning.

To learn more about the Master Gardeners, visit their website at <http://txmg.org/walker> Register online for this free workshop at www.MyHuntvilleLibrary.com Door prizes will be awarded. Contact Mary Kokot at the library at 936-291-5471 with questions or for additional information.

Children and Youth Library

Events & Classes

Mother Goose Lapsit - This new program is designed for parents and infants aged birth to 24 months, and features songs, toys, and stories on Mondays at 10:30 a.m. – Jan. 25, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Story Time - Every Wednesday and Friday at 10:45 a.m. Parents and their children are invited to enjoy songs, stories, and crafts with a new theme each session. Jan. 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, 29, Feb. 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26

Lego Club - An elementary-aged building program on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month from 5:00-6:00 p.m. Legos are supplied and participants are encouraged to build themed creations. Jan. 21, Feb. 18

Family Movie Night - Doors to the Community Room open at 5:00 p.m., with the movie beginning promptly at 5:30 p.m. Family Movie Night is sponsored by the Texas Children's Health Plan Program. Complimentary drinks and popcorn are served and all viewers are encouraged to bring a pillow or blanket. To get the title of the movie being shown each month, contact Children's Coordinator Rachel McPhail at 936-291-5910. Feb. 12

Wii Friday - An exciting new program for elementary through high school-age students to enjoy the library's Wii system. From 4:00-6:00 p.m. Jan. 22, 29, Feb. 19

Read with the Dogs - The monthly Read with the Dogs program is held with help from Huntsville Pets Helping People. Children are invited to read to trained therapy dogs in 15-minute segments. Participants also receive a sticker with a picture of the dog they read to. Sign up for a session is available beforehand, but not required. 4:00-5:30 p.m. Feb. 15

For more information about any Children's programs at the Huntsville Public Library, please contact Children's Coordinator Rachel McPhail at 936-291-5910; for adult programs, contact Adult Services Coordinator Mary Kokot at 936-291-5471; for teen programs, contact Teen Services Coordinator Ashley Newsome at 936-291-5912.

Free Spanish classes at HPL

The ever popular free Spanish classes are returning to the Huntsville Public Library! Instructor Beth Williamson will teach on Tuesdays in the Community Room. The 14-week program begins February 2, and materials are provided.

Register now to reserve a spot (35 students maximum for each class). Beginning classes will meet from 1:00 pm. to 3:00 p.m. and advanced classes from 3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. Register online at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com or call Mary at 936-291-5471 for additional information.

WALKER COUNTY NEEDS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRARS!

Volunteer Deputy Registrars are entrusted with the responsibility of officially registering voters in the State of Texas. They are appointed by county voter registrars and charged with helping increase voter registration in the state. Deputy Voter Registrars will be acting as an agent on behalf of Diana McRae, Walker County Voter Registrar, to register voters.

Accordingly, the deputy will be expected to understand and abide by the Texas Election Code.

Before deputation, all interested persons must complete the state mandated training provided by the Walker County Voter Registration Office free of charge.

WHO CAN BE A VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR?

You are eligible to register voters in Walker County if you:

- ✓ are at least 18 years old;
- ✓ are a United States citizen;
- ✓ not have been determined by a final judgment of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be
 - totally mentally incapacitated, or
 - partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote;
- ✓ never have been convicted of failing to deliver a voter application to a voter registrar;
- ✓ not have been finally convicted of a felony, or, if convicted, must have
 - fully discharged the sentence, including any term of incarceration, parole, or supervision, or completed a period of probation ordered by any court, or
 - been pardoned or otherwise released from the resulting disability to vote;
- ✓ not have been finally convicted of identity theft under Section 32.51 of the Penal Code; and
- ✓ are a resident of the state of Texas.



HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR

- Contact the voter registrar in your county.
- If you are eligible, the voter registrar will issue you a certificate of appointment and give you a receipt book.
- However, **you may not receive another person's voter registration application until you have completed the training developed by the Secretary of State** in accordance with House Bill 1570. At the time of your appointment, the voter registrar will provide information about the times and places at which the training is offered.

DUTIES OF A VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR

To distribute and accept a voter registration application form from any resident of the county who is:

- A United States citizen;
- A resident of the county;
- At least 17 years and 10 months of age;
- Not a convicted felon (unless the person's sentence has been completed, including probation or parole or the person has been pardoned or otherwise released from the resulting disability to vote);
- Not a person determined by a final judgment of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be (1) totally mentally incapacitated; or (2) partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

A volunteer deputy registrar may distribute and accept applications from voters who wish to change or correct information on their voter registration certificate (such as name or address).

WALKER COUNTY'S 2016 DEPUTY REGISTRAR TRAINING SCHEDULE:

December 8, 2015, at 2:00pm
January 7, 2016 at 2:00pm
March 16, 2016, at 2:00pm
April 5, 2016, at 2:00pm
May 5, 2016, at 2:00pm *
June 8, 2016 at 2:00pm

July 6, 2016, at 2:00pm
July 21, 2016 at 10:00am
August 4, 2016, at 2:00pm
August 23, 2016 at 10:00am
September 14, 2016, at 2:00pm
2017 Schedule will be available Jan. 2017

** Training will be cancelled in the event of a primary run-off.*

PLEASE CALL (936) 436-4959 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Tree Sale!

**Saturday, February 6, 2016
7:30 am to 11:30 am**

Walker County Storm Shelter 455 Hwy 75 North, Huntsville, TX

1,250 Hardwood and Softwood Trees \$1.00 Donation per Tree



Sponsored by **Walker County Proud Communities**

Trees Donated by **Texas Forest Service**

Educational Materials Furnished by **Walker County Master Gardeners &
City of Huntsville Solid Waste and Recycling**